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E.O. 12958: DECL: 8/22/16
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [VM](#)
SUBJECT: PALTALK/8406 BLOC ACTIVIST DETAINED AGAIN

REF: A) HCMC 925; B) HCMC 436 AND PREVIOUS

CLASSIFIED BY: Robert Silberstein, Political Officer, ConGen
HCMC, State Department.
REASON: 1.4 (d)

CLASSIFIED BY: Seth Winnick, Consul General REASON: 1.4 (d)

¶1. (C) On the night of August 18, plainclothes police detained Truong Quoc Huy and his brother Trung Quoc Tuan at an internet cafe in HCMC. (Per reftels, Huy is a member of the "8406 bloc" dissident group and one of three individuals held by police for nine months in the "PalTalk" Internet chatroom case.) Nguyen Thu Tram, another 8406 Bloc member, was also at the internet cafe, but was not detained. At the time of his detention, Huy was accessing PalTalk. Tram told us that she and Huy were not communicating, only listening, and that Huy's brother Tuan had not been using the Internet. Tuan was released after six hours detention, but Huy was remanded into police custody.

¶2. (C) On August 21, we spoke with Chau Thi Hoang, Huy's mother, who told us that the police had read her Huy's arrest warrant, stating that he violated Article 79 of the Vietnamese Penal Code for "attempting to overthrow the People's Government." Huy's mother said that police briefly brought her son home to gather his clothes and belongings for a lengthy detention. At that time, police also searched the house and confiscated a digital camera that was a "gift from Huy's friend who lives in India. (Note: this is an apparent reference to the leader of the Bach Dang Giang Foundation, Pham Ba Hai. Per ref A, the Foundation is planning a series of protests in Vietnam to coincide with the APEC leaders' summit in November. End note.) Police also confiscated two desktop computers and conducted a thorough search of the home for a laptop computer that Huy was supposed to have received from yet another Bloc member.

¶3. (C) Huy's mother confirmed that from the time of his release on July 8 until this arrest, Huy had been in regular contact with political activists Do Nam Hai and Le Tri Tue. After his July release, Huy himself reported to us that police had placed him under travel restrictions and had threatened to prosecute him again should he continue his political activism. Huy's mother reported that Hai and Tue had advised her to hire an attorney and had suggested that they would provide financial support. Police have refused to provide her with additional information on the condition of her son despite repeated phone calls.

WINNICK